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WIND ON THE LYRE

By

WILLARD B. ARNOLD

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WIND ON THE LYRE

I pick up my lyre,
playing music
drifting to me
on the wind of the night;
music compelling,
music inspiring
my mind to think,
my fingers to play
these notes upon my lyre.

I hear from the
music of the night,
from the symphony
the cosmos plays,
a song of memory,
a song leading me
to put to words on
pages the scenes
of my boyhood;
of happy days
when we romped together,
playing baseball
and hide and seek,
and all those boyhood games
and all those boyhood scenes
come back to me again.

Out of the night
where thoughts are born
comes the power now
urging me to sing
yet another song,
a song of places

I have seen and
a song of places
where I have longed to be,
places of my dreams,
and all these pictures
march like battalions
before my eyes.

I must play on,
the wind that blows
among the stars is
blowing to me now
the faint echoes
of great thoughts;
echoes are all my lines
will bear and from this
music of eternal power
and from this symphony,
I play a third song,
a song of thoughts
upon my lyre.

SCENES

1.

I go to the spring,
to the cool water
bubbling from the earth;
going back to the time
when life was young,
when life was new,
when life surged
like water from the earth,
going back to my boyhood days,
to all the scenes I knew,
going back to a small
town up in Vermont.

In the water clear
and cool and in the
spring of reverie
I see a boy of nine,
the self that was, and
with me my playmates,
the gang whom I knew;
and now all the crazy
things we did on a dare,
and now all the fun
we had together in
our gang, come back,
rise like mist from
spring water.

I recall sneaking
over fences to run
through an orchard, and

shaking the apple trees
so the fruit came tumbling down;
and filling our pockets
we raced to the road
before the farmer could
catch us on his land
and in his orchard;
and there were the
hikes that we made,
the hills we climbed,
the stones we threw;
all the noisy play,
all the wrestling,
all the tussling,
all the things we
did in the gang.

In the winter the
wind might blow,
blow sharp and raw
upon our faces, but
what did we care:
we went skating,
we went skiing,
and snowshoeing,
and riding on a double
runner down a snowy hill;
and in the summer
what good times:
going swimming,
going fishing,
playing games,
all the games kids will play;
through the whole year,
through winter and spring,

through summer and fall,
what fun we had in the
long and golden days that
slipped slowly by like the
sap from a sugar maple.

I look in the spring,
in the cool water a
mirror of the past,
to see the face of
a teacher beloved
of memory, a woman
who brought the
world of nature
to our classroom,
a woman who took
our class on hikes
through the woods on
weekends in the spring,
when school was out.

We went mountain
climbing with our
teacher on such an
outing, and on that
morning met by the
library on the hill:
a noisy gang all
talking excitedly
and carrying our
knapsacks and lunch boxes
and hiking equipment.

In a moment we were
walking up the long

street until we came
to the last houses,
and then we made for
the open fields and
the gentle slopes,
which rose to the
hills and to the
mountain lifting
up above our town.

Up the trail we climbed,
scrambling up over a
knoll where a tree
pushed a big root
across our way, and
going on crossed a
plank over a brook;
we tramped through
shady woods where the
sunlight wafted down,
leafing the earth in
a play of light and
shadow, and as we
jogged up the trail,
we noted the many
shrubs and trees
and the animals
and birds around.

We passed by alders,
by birches gray and
white and silver that
lanced through the woods;
by the maples and elms
and the gnarled oaks;

a chipmunk peered at
us from a fallen log
and a woodchuck poked
his head from a hole
and a gray squirrel
scampered across the
path, and our teacher
named the many birds
and animals she knew,
wanting us to share
her love for every
living creature.

We were talking in
shrill young voices
as we filed through
open country now by
rocks and boulders;
winding up the high
slopes, we came to the
summit and stood in a
world of wind and blue sky;
we looked down on the
small town and on the
mountains far away,
in blue waves that
were swelling and
billowing away to
a distant shore.

In this mirror of
the past the scenes
of a mother's love

and care are held:
how before I left
for school on cold
winter mornings she
had oatmeal warm and
waiting; and how she
bundled me up in a
sheepskin coat and
woolen mittens and
woolen scarf and
a leather helmet
before I stepped
out into the cold
of a Vermont winter.

I think of how she
cared for me when
I was sick and how
she watched in the
long hours of night
as I tossed with a
fever, and I think
of how she gave me
comfort when I met
the problems that
caused a boy sorrow;
and I think of how
she stood close by
my bed and heard my
prayers, and I turn
to other scenes of
a boy growing up
and becoming a man.

2.

I sing of high school,
of the enthusiasm
of youth shown at
pep rallies and at
football games and
of the fun and the
laughter of youth
as they dance and
of the energy of
youth who want to
dash this way and
that and who fancy
they are free like
young colts to go
where they please.

Out from the past
memories come back
of high school days:
of my first dance,
stumbling through
the steps in that
bygone age of jazz;
of my first kiss,
shy and brief and
stolen and sweet;
of the times we
went riding up the
main street in an
old jalopy with
the muffler out
to make a racket,
and of the jaunts

and the escapades
we thought daring.

I sing of time passing,
of time flowing by,
of the high school
years fading away,
until as a senior
I looked on a land
made bleak by the
depression; still
in a time of want
and hunger youth
kept their dreams;
we dreamed this was
but a passing era
and soon things
would be better;
youth will dream
long after others
have lost faith.

We were young colts
who did not know the
curbs of bridle and
reins and saddle,
save for those our
parents and teachers
would make us wear;
we saw the future
as a wide prairie
where we were free
to gallop at will,
where fences would
not bar the way and

a straight road led
across the prairie
to the mountain we
would reach where
we would be the
men of dreams.

We kept our faith
until graduation,
when the mirage
melted away and
we saw the world
as it was, and on
my first job the
awakening came;
I saw the future
not as a prairie,
but as a place
of back yards and
fences to keep me
confined, and so
I put my dreams
away and worked
and saved to go
to college.

In the summers and
in my free time I
worked to earn my
way in a day when
jobs were scarce;
and those college
days were times
of study and play,
of hours in the

library and talks
with professors,
and there were the
dances and serenades
and the football games
and the times we met
in campus coke joints
to talk with friends
and to make dates.

I stood in cap and
gown one day, not
knowing what lay
ahead, not knowing
I would go from
job to job in a
fruitless quest
for what I wanted,
not knowing a war
would bend me like
a sapling before
I could grow tall
and straight and
send my branches
shooting upward.

PICTURES

1.

In a land of cypress
swamps and acres of
open country where
palmettos, saw grass,
and black muck extend,
you stand on the bank
of a canal and in a
tide of night washed
by the stars, as the
earth spins toward
the gray dawn whose
pale fingers trace a
dim etching on the
horizon.

Over the broad land,
the vast Everglades
that are drowned in
sleep, you hear only
the faint sirens of
the insects and the
bass note of a bull
frog and the call of
the wild for a mate;
and on the rim of the
earth a distant glow
pulses up and the land
begins to awaken as
an alligator shoves
down the bank and a
fish splashes in the
swamp and a snake crawls
through the brush and

from all around are the
faint rustlings of birds
about to take flight.

You watch the dawn
bearing tapers and
raising gray light,
as the mask of the
night is torn away;
and from the bank
of the canal where
you stand you view
the mists steaming
up from the swamp,
where the cypress
trees are shaped
like bottles and
taper to somber
foliage and the
Spanish moss.

In the growing light,
a prelude to sunrise,
you look a short way
up the canal to the
alligator sunk in a
stupor, and close by
your feet a gopher
crawls from a hole;
and now from their
nests and roosts and
from their coverts,
in a great surge and
with a whirring of wings,
ten thousand birds soar

up to clutter the sky,
and soon they form in a
darkly penciled line
and arrow their way, and
other birds alight and
stalk upon the land,
rosy-hued flamingoes
walking as if on stilts,
cranes and ibises pointing
their beaks and blue herons
plucking their feathers.

Beyond the swamp
the glades extend to
the east, a terrain of
saw grass and palmettos
grouped at intervals in
clusters like fans, and
the soil of black muck
runs down deep and the
open land stretches out
to a hammock, a rise of
ground where tapering
palms and stark pines
lift against the sky;
and on the horizon the
grayness grows whiter
and tints of rose and
salmon and ochre soon
mantle the clouds and
the sky opens up like
a parasol, as the sun
rises to knight the
world with a golden
sceptre.

2.

In a mood for fun
and laughing and gay
we enter the gate to
mingle with the crowd
at the carnival that
night, and we saunter
about the oval where
lights strung above
shine on the tents and
on lurid signs and ropes
and fluttering pennants;
we pass the barkers
at the ticket booths,
ranting at length as
they try to sell the
crowd, and by the many
show entrances groups
of people gather.

We move by the freak
shows where the signs
tell of the monkey man
hairy like an ape and
crawling on all fours,
of the giant lifting
huge weights and the
man swallowing fire
and the woman with
scales like a fish;
we proceed by other
tents where girls in
scanty dress lure a
hundred male eyes and
the barkers in broad

terms give a preview
of the show within.

By the beano games
we go where people
bend over counters and
cover the numbers on the
boards the showman calls,
and behind the counters
are the clocks and the
lamps and the dishes and
the pans and many other
things to be given away;
we stroll by a shooting
gallery where the shots
ring sharp and clear and
where the little ducks
move in rows along the
prop in the background;
we stand after a while
by the ferris wheel
and buy a ticket, and
take a ride and on the
wide seats swaying as
they travel, we go up
and down and rotate
round and round and
faster and faster.
We stop before long
by the merry-go-round,
watching the children
riding and having fun,
and on the platform
a little boy with a
lollypop clings to a

hobby horse while his
father holds him for
he is too young and
scared to go alone,
and ahead of him a
little girl wearing
pigtails and ribbons
rides with a carefree
abandon and waves to
parents smiling back;
the carrousel whirls
around and the shrill
music winds on and the
colors of seats and of
ponies and harness all
mingle and blur before
the eyes and all the
girls and boys blend
with the movement.

We pass the hot dog
stands and sniff the
warmth of frankfurts
and scent of mustard
and spice of relish
and aroma of coffee,
as a man near sells
pink fluff candy spun
on sticks, and then we
see a couple exhibits
and we leave by the
gate as the skirl of
the carrousel and the
calls of the barkers
fade away behind us.

3.

By the leanto we stood
in a clearing near the
pond that lay some two
thousand feet below the
mountain we would climb;
we had traveled by car
from our homes and had
taken a tote road into
the woods for the last
few miles, and later we
had hiked up the trail
with our packs to this
base camp near Chimney
Pond and at the foot
of Mt. Katahdin.

We held our breath and
gazed in wonder on the
towering strength and
beauty of this mighty
mountain whose summit
meets the rising sun,
first land in America
to be touched by the
gentle hand of dawn;
night was falling and
shadows deepening in
the ravines, and to me
the mountain with the
flanking ridges winged
to a ruffled crest was
an eagle mounted upon
the darkening sky.

We met on that first
night at the camp an
old man staying in a
leanto not far away,
a man of rugged face
and gray hair who had
climbed this mountain
in Maine every summer
since he had retired,
a man who knew every
trail by heart and to
whom the mountain was
a friend, and a man who
spoke in awe about the
strange music that he
could hear on a lonely
slope at night and who
felt the spirit of the
mountain always near.

In the mountain air,
cold even though it
was summer, we slept
under blankets with
pine needles for a
mattress; and early
on the next morning
we set out to climb
the Cathedral trail;
we passed the warden's
cabin, a rough frame
building on Chimney
Pond, before we hit
the trail; and as we

climbed through the woods we told about our plans to stay at the base camp a few days and to climb the mountain by different trails.

We trudged the narrow trail blazed through woods where pine and spruce and fir grew among maple and ash and elm, and we came to a brook where the water purled over the rocks, and we crossed on stepping stones to the opposite bank, and farther along we saw a pheasant and heard a partridge making a loud drumming as he soared up in flight; we climbed above the timber line, passing the rocks as sharp as cathedral spires for which the trail was named, and as we scrambled up ledges and stood on steep precipices we looked down on the basin and the pond below.

Up to the summit
we clambered and
gazed down on the
hills and valleys,
on woods and fields,
on farms and fences,
on farmhouses and on
red silos; and in one
direction some lakes
spotted the terrain,
the sunshine making
bright fingerprints
on their faces; and
in another, mountains
crouched like bears
with dark blue fur;
we viewed directly
below us the rocky
slopes that tumbled
to the woods and far
away the pond and the
smoke rising from the
chimney of the warden's
cabin.

I stood by the leanto
alone that last night,
as my friends had gone
to bed, and pausing in
musing on the last few
days I looked up to the
mountain, an eagle with
wings spread for flight;
and on the wind came the
strange music of which

the old man had spoken,
and in chords of great
beauty the mountain was
lifting her song to the sky.

4.

I hang this picture
in the sunny living
room of the home of
memory and it hangs
above the hearth in
a setting where old
friends gather in a
circle and where the
talk is of the days
once known; and this
canvas is of Boston,
city of culture and
tradition and formal
elegance and a city
of friendly spirit.

Gazing on the canvas
of this city that is
near to my heart and
youth and family and
birth, I note that in
my study the picture
comes alive with the
old familiar scenes,
the mists that form
on the river Charles
in summer, the men on
side streets roasting
chestnuts in the fall,
the snow that mantles
Copley Square in the
winter, and from the
many seasons past I
recall going from my

classes in the Back Bay
down Newbury Street,
by the art galleries,
by the book shops,
by the antique stores,
by the small restaurants,
by the schools and churches,
by all the old bricked
glory of this city.

I cross Arlington Street
to enter the Public Gardens,
and pass the George Washington
monument and the bridge
over the stream and the
swanboats circling near
and the lovers who are
strolling hand in hand.
I head for the Common
from where I view the
Park Street church on
a corner and the gold
dome of the State House
on the hill, and at the
top of the stone steps
facing Beacon Street,
I turn right by a couple
book shops and go down the
hill to King's Chapel, an
old gray stone church of
square tower; and in the
graveyard adjoining are
stones dating back to
the Colonial period.

In a hurry to catch
a train home from the
North Station I press
through Scollay Square,
by the theaters and the
cheap photo studios and
dingy restaurants and
hamburg joints, and on
board the train later
I think of other walks:
by Fanueil Hall Market,
where the pushcarts are
piled high with fruits
and vegetables, and by
the old North Church,
Paul Revere's home and
other historic places;
and the walks to one
place where I worked,
going past the coffee
firms to the wharves
along the waterfront.

I know you as a city
not only of familiar
scenes but of hearty
occasions, as dining
at Steuben's and the
dancing at the Hotel
Lenox and squiring a
girl friend along the
river drive will show;
I think fondly of the
Esplanade concerts on

summer nights that my
friends and I used to
attend; and a few times
we took the boat ride
up the river Charles;
and other occasions
of visits to museums,
hours in the Public
Library and college
lectures I recall.

I remember above all
one Christmas Eve on
Louisburg Square, and
on that night a crowd
throngs the square to
sing carols and listen
to the bellringers and
mingling with the rest,
I glance up at the old
but elegant brick homes
of white doors and brass
knockers and bay windows,
where candles flicker
on the china rare and
on the silver shining
and the cups gleaming
and the fancy plates
designed in patterns
of blue and white, and
inside the homes the
people are chatting
and laughing and gay
and sharing pastries
and drinking punch.

In the press of the
crowd pushing along
in a brotherly spirit
and all singing carols,
I make my way, looking
up at the stone steps
of the homes where the
bellringers in scarlet
dress are standing and
ringing in time to their
songs and as people step
from the frosty night into
the homes of their friends,
they give holiday greetings;
in the windows the candles
shine on the creches and
the pictures of Madonna
and Child, and up above
the tossing heads of the
crowd, the gabled roofs
point to a sky that is
snowing starlight.

5.

I travel in thought to
where I have never been,
to the Paris of today, a
city of wide boulevards,
chestnut trees and cafés,
a city of dress shops and
theaters and museums and
churches, and I move down
warped side streets past
corner stores with bright
awnings, viewing the men
wearing berets who go by
and the plump housewives
who stop to bargain and
soon by the river Seine,
pass the bookstalls and
women selling flowers.

In my fancy I stay for
a short time in the city,
going a few nights to the
Paris Opera to listen to
drama and song or to the
Comedie Française to see
a few plays, and I enjoy
dinner some at Laurent,
a sidewalk café on the
Champs Elysees and one
rainy night at Joseph's,
quiet place of good food
on the Rue Pierre Charron;
during the day I may go
down the Rue de la Paix
past jewelry stores and

perfume shops and elite
hotels and I stroll by
museums and cathedrals,
by medieval Notre Dame
and high in Montmartre
the modern cathedral
of Sacre Coeur.

I saunter through the
Place de la Concorde
one morning and view
the Egyptian obelisk
in the square before
going under the shade
trees in the Tuileries
Gardens, watching the
trim girl cycling by
and the student from
perhaps the Sorbonne,
his books in a basket
before the handle bars;
I move past the Louvre
that holds within many
valuable art treasures,
minding the island of
the river Seine known
as the Ile de la Cité,
where the Palais Royal
extends and beyond are
the massive towers of
Notre Dame cathedral.

In my musing I look
on this island where

Paris was born and I
recall the time long
ago when King Clovis
of the Franks set up
a fortress city here;
and from this origin
Paris grew in extent,
spreading to the right
bank and the left bank
in concentric circles
outward and over the
centuries, during war,
revolution and plague,
while kings ruled and
empires were founded,
through the times of
the nobility and the
period of presidents
and modern republics,
the city expanded in
influence to become
the Paris of today.

Paris lives as a core
of art and culture as
museums and libraries
and studios for music
and painting and the
schools and galleries
will show, and it is a
city of passion as well,
where lovers gather in
the dusky cafés amid a
blend of tobacco smoke,
throbbing dance music

and naked dancers who
perform for the crowd;
Paris is much more for
it is a city of burning
words penned to endure
in the name of beauty
and light and freedom.

In my study these words
signify famous men such
as François Villon, poet,
who lived in the Paris
of the Middle Ages and
sang with power of the
drama of life and love
in his day, a shining
intellect who made way for the
Renaissance about to dawn; and
during the nineteenth century,
Emile Zola who sustained the
honor of his country when he
joined the side of justice in
the Dreyfus affair, gallant
words striking like swords in
the battle to make this world
a brotherhood of free men.

6.

I dream of being in Shanghai,
city on the left bank of the
Whangpoo river and main port
of the country, and I take a
rickshaw ride in my thought
up the Bund, and I skirt the
waterfront by the domed bank
building and Chinese customs
tower and the Cathay hotel;
I pass the Public Gardens a
short time later and after
a while the boy bends low in
the shafts to drag me over
the arched bridge spanning
Soochow creek and I come
to my hotel soon.

On the day after my arrival,
I drive up the Nanking road
through the shopping center,
on by the racing club where
the betting is intense and
at the end of the road the
Chinese temple rising near;
I proceed by these scenes
for the country where the
marshes extend and water
buffalo graze and farmers
till the land with wooden
plows, going by the straw
huts of the villages, and
finally I return to the
city after a brief view
of rural life in China.

I visit the old Chinese
quarter of the city one
day, having seen by now
the Shanghai of western
influence, and I saunter
through a maze of dirty
crooked streets to view
small open shops having
banners whose ideograms
tell about the bargains
and sales, and I gaze on
merchants wearing their
skullcaps and tunics as
they wait on customers;
I note within the shops
the baskets and pottery
and bronze bowls and the
fancy wood carvings, too.

Up the crowded streets,
I push through milling
throngs by a number of
scenes catching my eye:
beggars press upon me
seeking alms, a street
vendor shouts about the
wares in packs at each
end of a shoulder pole,
Chinese barbers shave
their victims right in
the open and by a wall,
using little water and
no soap in the process;
I stroll by the Willow
Pattern Tea House that

rests on piles above a
murky pond and come to
the bird market where
birds in basket cages
are sold.

I stand before a curio
shop to view a wedding
procession filing past:
shabby children in the
front bear tall gilded
lanterns, and musicians,
beating huge drums and
blowing fifes, step by
making bizarre music;
two bearers follow who
bring wedding gifts in
shiny boxes, and behind
move attendants having
umbrellas of silk and
towering fans and now
borne by four porters,
the bright palanquin
whose curtains shade
the waiting bride and
having witnessed this,
I return to my hotel.

On the waterfront that
final day in the city
I stand looking upon
the river to graceful
steamers riding light
swells in the distance;
small craft are plying
across the water near:

sampans with mat roofs
over their cabins that
coolies scull, bringing
grain and rice from the
outlying farms, and the
junks of tawny slatted
sails catching the wind;
others berthed close by
have high sterns bright
with color and rich in
ornament, and at length
I turn from the scene.

I stroll up the canyon of
Foochow road that night,
threading my way through
Chinese crowds, by small
groups talking together
in clanging consonants;
past the open doors of
restaurants where the
lights burn dimly from
upper floors and paper
lanterns swing from the
balconies and down side
streets with all their
clubs and cafés and the
opium dens and gambling
dens and the brothels;
through the atmosphere
of a city of warmth and
passion and hate and fear,
and above all a city of
mystery, when the night
rolls in like the tide
up the river Whangpoo.

THOUGHTS

1.

I stood on the deck of
a transport sailing to
the South Pacific with
troops crowded aboard,
bound for the war that
raged on land and ocean,
in many quarters of the
globe, and I thought of
my friends and home and
family and of you, my love,
our final kiss, a thing to be
cherished through all the
lonely months ahead, and
now I turned to thoughts
of the past few months
of Navy training.

In a moment I dwelled on
running to muster every
morning and the manual
of arms we had learned
and the constant drill,
and the exercises that
we had suffered on the
cold days when the icy
wind swept across the
point in the river and,
on the waiting in chow
lines and marching to
and from our classes;

after several weeks at
this place of initial
training I got orders
to another school where
we watched signal flags
and learned morse code
and read blinker light
and plotted courses and
bearings, so we could be
better robots for the war,
but not better men for the
future peace; and I thought
back to the war's beginning,
when like a million others
I was caught by the clamor,
cast my career from me like
a stone and rushed to the
fray that swept me along
in confusion and despair.

I stood by the rail and
looked out on the sea, the
mystic and occult being
who knew the things we
could not fathom and held
in her depths the fate
of every man aboard as
death might be her whim;
we lived under a shadow,
for we traveled through
waters where torpedoes
ranged and death struck
like a shark and ships
had been sunk not far
from where we were now;

I thought of the cargo we
carried of thousands of
young men who had had
so little time to live
and some with so much
to lose in death.

I turned from thoughts
of those aboard to the
wider circle of youth,
the millions who were
fighting, and I brooded
on the waste of the war,
that withered youth as
drought shriveled corn,
drying the green shucks
and turning them brown,
taking away from youth
their hope and strength,
leaving but the hardness
and wear the cynics own,
and I pondered this for
a long time and could
not down the anger and
the bitterness and pain
clutching my heart.

But more than the faith
of youth was wasted for
war lost time needed to
build a great science and
art and a vital culture;
war was a contagion, too;
the maimed and blind and
insane wore her scars, and

war was a parent rearing
the bawling children of
famine and plague whose
cries we would hear for
years to come, and when
I thought about all the
waste my anguish grew,
for the human race had
not yet developed the
art of peace.

Unable to consider the
tragedy longer I looked
upon the future and the
fight to win the peace;
we must gain the time
through peace to train
youth in the spirit of
acumen and stamina with
which to build enduring
values, and only through
peace could we build the
schools and the libraries,
and create the books and
music and art that would
benefit civilization.

Peace must be wrought
of the smoldering ore
left from the war and
beaten into shape with
bold strokes of vigor and
resolve, for we should
wage peace with zeal and
power and lofty purpose;

tomorrow would be an age
for heroes, for men who
could trump the darkness
and give the world light,
an age for men of thought,
for teachers and writers
and philosophers, and an
age for men of action,
for statesmen and bold
explorers in every line
of undertaking who dared
to believe in peace.

I began walking the deck,
unhappy about the world,
fearing that more potent
weapons of war would be
made and that one day the
issue would not be nation
against nation but all men
against all men, a battle
that would erase thought
and destroy much of the
human race; to avoid
disaster man must seek
a solution in a crusade
of culture and science
and religion and create
a race of superminds who
could govern the world
with reason and light.

2.

I lived in a Quonset hut
with my companions while
overseas and I spent the
final long months of the
war on a small island to
the rear where not bombs,
but monotony and boredom
were our constant lot as
the burden of dull tasks
and the idle moments and
dreary thoughts bore out;
these things behaved like
drugs, putting us into a
melancholy mood where we
might remain, for we knew
few with whom we could
confide our troubles.

Not only the tedium but
the worry weighed on us,
brought on by the delays
in mail when we waited
weeks to hear from home,
by the doubts we had of
the loyalty of those we
loved, since many wives
had broken with husbands;
by the threats of change
in duty which kept us in
suspense, by the power of
authority reducing us to
bondage and by the goad
of thwarted ambitions,
by all these problems,
we were confronted.

I lived through that
time of worry and doubt
and loneliness, aware of
my small part compared
to the men at the front,
who suffered the pain of
wounds and the fear of
death, and I was helped
by you, my love, a morning
star of hope beckoning
to me across the ocean,
a guide to the dawn of
the day when we should
be together in a world
of peace.

During my stay near the
end of the war on this
island of coconut palms
and low hills I learned
what tragedy meant, not
from actual combat but
from the impact of mind
on mind, the attitudes
shared in common and the
stories heard from those
who had known far more
bitterness and sorrow;
and such was the story
a young ensign told me
one night of the death
of his brother who had
been killed but a short
time before, a youthful
composer of music and a

genius unsung, for death
had come as frost to the bloom.

I stood on the beach
alone under the stars
a few days after this,
thinking of the young
man's death and of how
he could have given so
much to the culture of
his country had he lived;
war killed culture as it
killed bodies and minds,
and the music that this
youth might have scored
was lost for all time.

Not only the artists
but likely scientists
and educators and youth
who would lead in other
fields paid the penalty,
some through death and
others as prisoners to
a routine that did not
allow time for creative
thought; and of all the
young men of promise a
few would keep right on,
in spite of the setbacks
received during the war;
and I saw we would have
to rely on the few who
survived for the growth
of culture and science

needed to convert man
from war to a peace
that would endure.
I mused on my plunge of
the past few months into
the gay life of officers'
clubs, in a vain attempt
to escape the melancholy
brought on by a war that
dragged and by the dream
of you, my love, far away;
and in my pensive mood
I looked up to the stars,
shining as steady points
of light; and from their
beauty and peace I felt
a share of comfort and
from out of space came
the wind of the night,
strange music bringing
a message of hope, the
same wind a poet knows
as it plays on his lyre.

During those months on
the island, I called at
the hospitals on the men
who had been wounded and
on the men who had lost
their minds in combat or
from the strain of boredom
on lonely outposts to the
rear, and the screams and
grimaces of these cases

haunted my thinking as
I pondered the effects
of war on human behavior.

I came to realize that
the psychic health of
every person affected
any group behavior and
that war was really a
mental problem in one
respect, to be treated
with scientific means;
we must promote these
through further study
for future wars might
crush the human race.

I could picture along
what lines the study
should be made, and in
this picture the main
roles would be taken
by mental science and
medicine and physics
and chemistry, for we
should probe into the
mass hysteria leading
to war and into nerves
and glands to learn of
their influence on our
minds and into powers
such as telepathy and
into cosmic and solar
rays to find if they
have bearing on our

thinking and maybe
with these methods
and others we could
build a saner world.

During my tour of duty,
I often thought ahead
to the day after the
war when the nations
would try once again
to keep the peace by
political implements,
but leagues and unions
would not be adequate;
we must wage peace by
every medium we could,
through science to help
cure the hates and fears
causing war, and through
education and culture to
supply ideas, and through
religion to give faith
in a vast crusade; and
the hope of creating
a nobler human race
kindled me.

3.

We rode to work nearly
every day in our jeeps,
to the dull tasks that
kept us chained, and my
hutmates and I passed
the off duty hours by
going to the beaches
during the day and to
the movies or officers'
clubs at night, and we
often talked before we
went to bed about the
careers we once had and
about the future with
growing impatience as
we wondered when the
war would end.

I brooded on the grief
and the pain and on the
tumult and fury of the
war, while trying to go
to sleep after hearing
my friends; and as I
listened to the wind in
the palms that sounded
like falling rain above,
I thought of the threat
being made by our enemies
to the democratic concept
of the freedom of the mind,
the freedom we must
cultivate, which
meant this to me.

It meant freedom from government by decree, the control of ideas evident in countries with whom we were at war and in a country that was on our side at the moment, and it meant relief in time from some of the hates and fears which cause depressions and wars; I saw that man as an individual would have to be improved before group conduct and the environment could be amended.

I came to know the call of the future when near the end of the war the atomic bomb crashed on our world, and I noted that mankind must not only strive to free the minds of all people from the complexes that make war but must put above every other thought one common goal, the ascent of the human race up to world brotherhood and a better species of man on earth.

We had waited through
the long night and at
last the morning came,
bearing sunlight that
swept away the shadows;
the war had been won but
relief was mingled with
sorrow for those who had
fallen and we waited as
we had for this moment,
for our orders and for
men to take our posts
and for a ship going
home.

I stood a watch on the
deck of the transport,
soon after leaving the
island, and on that night
alone I thought of home
and family and of you, my
love, and of the future,
fearful that the mental
epidemic of war would
come again unless the
world through culture
and science and through
other means cured the
disease on a universal
scale.

It was the battle that
raged between force and
reason which made peace
hard to attain, the same
battle as in the days of

Archimedes, the sage, who was killed in an attack on Syracuse by soldiers who could not understand the geometric designs he drew; and I saw that the outcome of this battle between force and mind would determine man's ultimate fate, whether life and progress or death and ruin by the sword.

I chafed that between nations the laws of the jungle still prevailed, and tooth and claw and fang slashed the rival, and in the jungle the hate and fear and the mental disorder beset deliberation, making it hard to solve our many problems through the exchange of ideas, but above the jungle rose the mountain we must climb to cleaner air and to a nobler humanity.

We must be converted in heart and mind before we could climb the mountain,

as St. Paul was converted
on the road to Damascus
when a light from Heaven
stunned him and he saw a
need to better the world;
like him we should have
strength and reason and
courage and love and we
should set out like him
to help our fellow men.

In this task we should
pledge a common aim as
world citizens to make
the human race a wiser
species and to build a
world community living
together in peace, and
every man should learn
to make decisions and
share obligations for
that is the democratic
idea, and we must have
not only great minds to
aid progress but great
hearts to help bind the
world together in union
and fraternity.

We should spread around
the world through power
of thought and word and
deed the meaning of the
freedom of the mind as
deliverance from greed

and strife and hate and
war and from tyranny of
thought that would keep
us chained, and all of us
should work to make this
world a fit place for the
human race of superminds
who must one day stride
the earth.

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